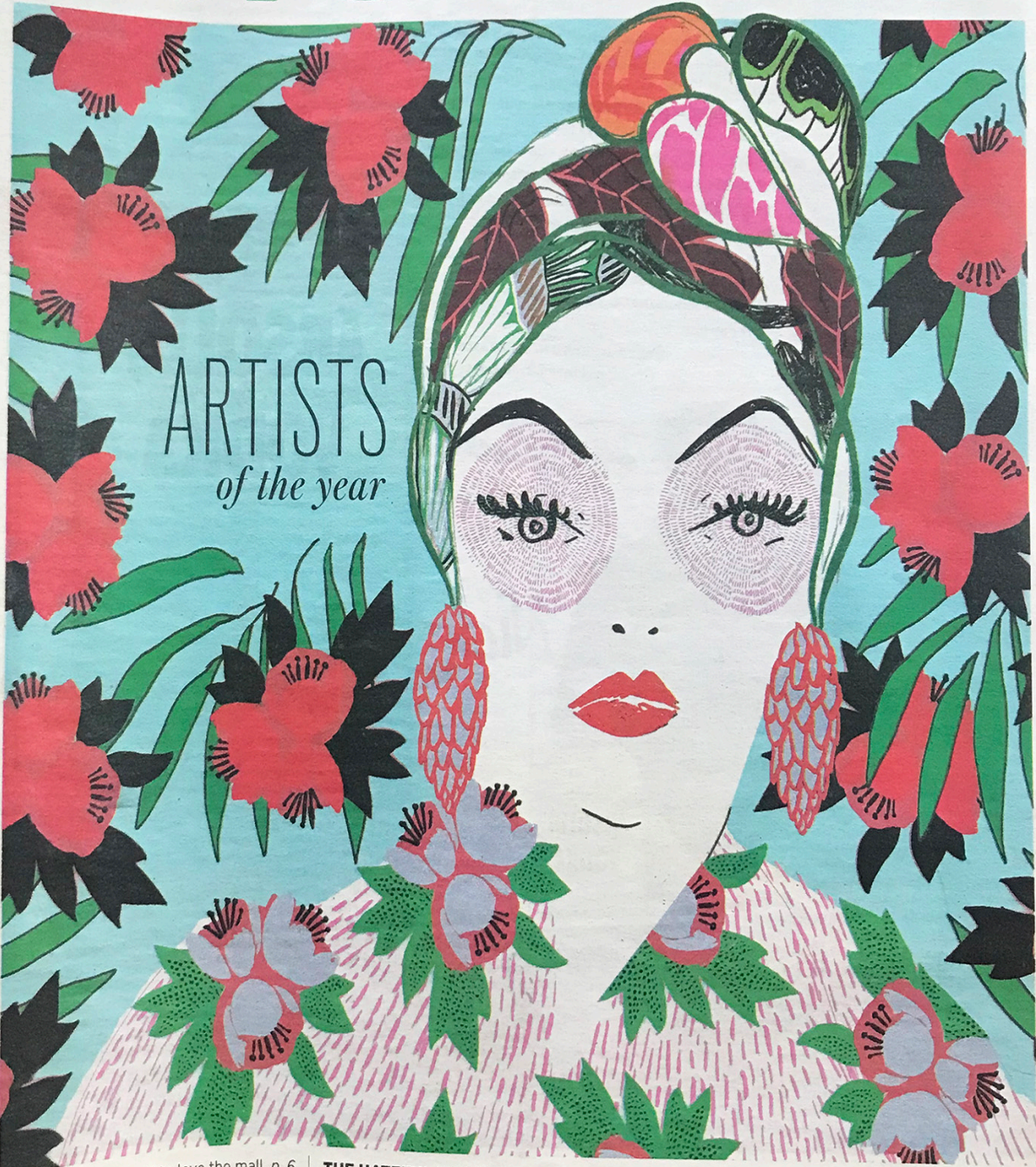


CITY PAGES



ARTISTS
of the year

ARTISTS *of the year*

As 2015 draws to a close, it's time to give some recognition to the artists, authors, filmmakers, and party hosts who made this year special. Despite hitting career highs, we're placing our bets on these talents continuing to grow in new and exciting ways.

In anticipation of what 2016 will bring, let's revisit the people who had a banner 2015.

KATE WORUM

ART

You may know Minneapolis-based illustrator Kate Worum from her sassy portraits of pop-culture icons, or her abstract artwork for *Live Current Volume 11*, but hopefully what you'll remember from here on out about this bold 27-year-old artist are butts.

Worum, an MCAD grad, became fascinated with painting posteriors, using her boyfriend as a model. "Boobs are all over the market right now, but I don't see asses anywhere. Let's put some butts out there," she says. The butts, which include a wide variety of body types, have appeared on wall installations and as prints in her Etsy shop right alongside greeting cards that proclaim "Eat a bag of dicks" and a floral collage that spells "Fuck."

On her way to becoming an artist, she took a detour to Winona State to pursue soccer for two years. However, her schedule was filled with art classes. "I was in this snowed-in town and bored out of my mind," she says. "I needed more of a challenge." Despite the financial burden, she eventually returned to the Twin Cities and enrolled at MCAD where her brash, colorful aesthetic was born from "making a lot of horrible artwork."

Worum hit her stride after being introduced to digital technology. "You don't have to create this amazing illustration from start to finish," she says. It was more her style to scan in handmade elements and play with their limitless variations.

For her senior piece, she worked on a 40-portrait series while living in a shipping container for two weeks for Project M in Frankfurt, Germany. The subjects were other participants of Project M, where artists come together to share ideas and work on various projects. "They had these



Kate Worum in her studio

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COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

energy unique to the area, infused with community engagement and a sense of fun and the fantastical. Forney has said she considers clowning to be an artistic social practice, engaging audiences in small acts of curiosity. The Smallest Museum does so as well. -CAMILLE LEFEVRE

PETE DRIESSEN

ART

Pete Driessen's Franconia Boat Tower was something of a — ahem — towering achievement. The massive, site-specific sculpture, funded via a 2015 Jerome/Franconia Sculpture Park Residency Fellowship, included four vintage boats stacked on an armature that allowed rainwater to flow through the piece as waterfalls. It was breathtaking. In its construction, materiality, and insight into the transformative properties of decay, the tower was an extension of Driessen's ongoing TuckUnder Projects, a multidisciplinary, multi-space gallery he operates out of his home.

Driessen's midcentury bungalow gallery in southwest Minneapolis, an area rife with teardowns and characterless McMansions, testifies to the artist's perseverance, independence, creativity, and dedication — not only to his art, but to other artists in the community. His garage (a traditional white-cube gallery), basement bathroom (a.k.a. the Leaky Sink Gallery), and yard (featuring a raspberry patch, water pump, and other lawn ornaments) are research, collaboration, and exhibition spaces. During TuckUnder receptions, which showcase the work of emerging and established artists, the place is abuzz. Payment for work sold goes directly to the artist.

Driessen's artistic practice — which includes abstract and sociopolitical paintings, found-object installations, and conceptual work — has been widely exhibited.

A recent show, "Floor Plan," with fellow artists/curators Jehra Patrick and Sean Smuda at Gallery 71, furthered the national discussion about the influential, fundamental roles artists play as curators.

In total, Driessen's artistic practice is about liberation, creative freedom in the midst of corporate control, and the potency of a David in a world of Goliaths.

-CAMILLE LEFEVRE

JENN SCHAAL

COMEDY

Minneapolis' Jenn Schaal has had quite the year. In 2015, she was named by City Pages readers as the best local standup comic for the second time, made Growler Magazine's "Five Minnesota Comedians to Watch," and co-hosted the *XOXOJK* podcast. As if that weren't impressive enough, Schaal is also a kick-ass CrossFit powerlifter.

Her unlikely entry into comedy began eight-and-a-half years ago, when she signed up for Acme's Funniest Person contest. The headliner was none other than Tig Notaro. "I was that annoying person at parties who was always 'on' and doing bits," she says. Though Schaal had never tried standup before, she did three minutes onstage at Acme and was hooked.

"When you walk into a room full of strangers, and you get them to laugh with you about things that you think are funny, there's nothing like that rush," she says. "Every time I get onstage I feel that. I love that, and I want to keep doing it."

In her comedy, Schaal excels at capturing thirtysomething struggles. This year has been particularly challenging for the 38-year-old, who juggles a full-time job in sales, an intense workout regimen, and dating. "I used to get so much material from online dating, but I've gotten much better at picking out decent people," she says. "There's no crazy-town dimension to it."

To fit it all in, Schaal has cut back on open-mic nights. "I felt like I needed to put myself first," she says. "The more I value myself, the less I want to do comedy. I'm still trying to figure it out." And while she admits to feeling guilty about backing away ever-so-slightly from the limelight, she's determined not to lose the momentum she's built up thus far.

"I'm trying to launch a new business that makes days 30 hours long," Schaal says. "I really want to get a Kickstarter going for that. The world would be a much better place if we could sleep 10 hours a day, work 10 hours if we want, and still have an additional 10 hours to do whatever the hell we wanted. That's my plan. If someone would fund it, I think 30-hour days could be the next thing." -ERICA RIVERA

JULIE SCHUMACHER

LITERARY

This year was a year of firsts for Min-



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Pete Driessen's
Franconia Boat
Tower

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

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